



Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission

Tuesday, July 22, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.

Air Pollution Control District Boardroom Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Announcements – Katy Schneider, Co-Chair

The following Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, “Commission” or “LMTAC”) members were present: Henry Heuser (Co-Chair), Katy Schneider (Co-Chair), Allen Steinbock (Secretary/Treasurer), Maria Koetter, Claude Stephens, Amy Johnson, Betsy Ruhe, Cheri Bryant Hamilton, Todd Eberle, Robert Eberenz, Jr., Nelson Maynard, and Kenya Wade, as well as ex-officio Commissioners Mark White and Michelle King.

Co-Chair Henry Heuser, Jr. brought the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes – Katy Schneider, Co-Chair

Henry asked for and received unanimous approval of the minutes from last meeting.

III. Old Business

a. Update from Office of Sustainability – Maria Koetter, Director of Sustainability

Maria Koetter, Commissioner (Office of Sustainability), reported that this year’s budget includes a green infrastructure incentive program. The program will match grants from MSD up to \$10,000 each. This program will be rolled out in the next few months. Maria will give an update on the program at next month’s meeting.

b. Update from Urban Forestry Coordinator – Erin Thompson

Erin Thompson, Urban Forestry Coordinator, reported that she has been working with Mark White, Ex-officio Commissioner (City Arborist). The tree budget is now located in Public Works. Mark and Erin are evaluating projects for this year’s funds. Erin has been approached by a few neighborhood associations for funding. Erin had interns from The Nature Conservancy for the past two weeks. They knocked on doors in Chickasaw Park neighborhood. It was a hard area to work in because of the high rate of renters. Commissioner Cheri Bryant Hamilton offered to help share Erin’s promotional materials.

Mark said his staff is currently on target with their tree-watering goals.

Erin also reported that the 9th street plantings (service berries and redbuds) didn't make it. The service contractor is replacing them. Ex-officio Commissioner (APCD) Michelle King asked when the 9th street corridor was planted. Erin said early June 2014. Erin has been talking to the president of the Park DuValle neighborhood association. Maintenance isn't being upheld by the neighborhood, so Erin is having her contractor help out. Henry asked how they are paying for it. Erin said funds for watering are coming from last year's budget. Henry asked about how the trees at the Library were funded. Erin said money was allocated from last year's budget to pay for those trees, which will be planted once construction is complete.

Mark suggested getting MSD rain barrels to help water trees in neighborhoods. Michelle suggested that the city purchase gator bags in bulk and sell them at a discounted rate or donate them to help neighborhoods water trees. Erin said Mesude Duyar, Ex-officio Commissioner (Metro Parks) found an alternate "gator bag" for \$19. Erin said the gator bags are taken off during dormant season, but they can last up to 5 years if closely watched and taken of.

c. Nature Conservancy Update- Katy Schneider on behalf of Cadell Walker

Katy reported that Louisville has received a healthy trees, healthy city designation. Erin said Cadell said she wouldn't find out about the designation for sure until September 1st, but Katy said Cadell told her this on the phone yesterday. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is applying for a JPB grant out of New York, a poverty and environment proposal that will be awarded in 10 cities. Two are fully funded, and eight require a one-to-one match, so the grant provides 50% of the necessary funding. It would provide for a two-year position. We would ask for someone with urban heat island and tree expertise. The grant is due this week and she should hear back by Sept 1st.

Erin said Cadell is applying for two grants – one through the U.S. Forest Service and the other is through American Forest. Commissioner Claude Stevens mentioned that sometimes Kresge will match those grants. Katy said TNC has a large global proposal with UPS and they want to include a local component that would include \$25,000 for Louisville. Cadell is currently meeting with the state representative for TNC.

IV. New Business

a. Tree Canopy Study – Jenny Gulick and Rachel Compte, Davey Resource Group

Jenny Gulick, Davey Resource Group, gave an update on the Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment. Rachel Compte, Davey Resource Group (DRG), was also in attendance. Jenny said Rachel is new to DRG, but not to the industry. She has masters in environmental planning, knows GIS and has a degree in horticulture. She's going to be the project manager for this project. Rachel and Jenny are located in Northern Kentucky.

Jenny said the contract was signed in late April 2014 and kick-off meeting was held in May. The project schedule is located on the handout (Appendix A). The project should be complete October 31, 2014. They want to complete it in time for fall and spring tree plantings. DRG is on schedule. The project will include the completion of a report and user-friendly fact sheets.

Jenny said they completed a pilot to make sure their processes would work. Jenny presented the results, which are included in the PowerPoint presentation (Appendix B). The UTC includes land cover class (e.g., grass, trees, water). The focus year is 2012, and they will compare 2012 to 2008

and 2004. The pilot allowed them to estimate the loss in tree canopy in the downtown from 2004 – 2012 – an 8.9% decrease.

Henry asked if the data was considered to be old. Jenny said for this project, 2012 is considered recent. Many cities update their UTC analysis every three years. An audience member asked if the analysis was completed in the summer. Jenny said yes.

The presentation (again, Appendix B) lists the statistics that will be calculated (e.g., tree canopy acres, bare soil acres) and the summary layers (e.g., project boundaries, parcels, watersheds). The statistics will be calculated for all council districts, and will provide possible reasons for the results. DRG will quantify economic benefits of air quality, carbon storage and stormwater mitigation by species, by neighborhood and by council district. They are using US Forest Services' iTree software. Jenny said iTree isolates by species, so we will know the best performing species.

Jenny stressed that the presentation includes preliminary numbers – these numbers are not final!!

Katy asked if it's possible to obtain the number of trees necessary to get to 40% average tree canopy across Louisville. This will help set a goal for the city. Jenny said yes. Katy said Brian Stone's urban tree canopy study estimated 1.2 million spaces for tree plantings in Louisville, but this includes places where we wouldn't want to plant trees such as in golf courses and other recreational spaces. Jenny said their analysis will remove all recreational space from their analysis for the planting plan. It will also include cost estimates. An audience member asked if there was a way with dealing with power lines in the analysis. Jenny said yes. Jenny also mentioned that a UTC analysis picks up every tree. It's very precise. They will look at the city by census block to perform a socioeconomic analysis.

Jenny said they have finished the calculations for the neighborhoods within the Urban Services District, but they have not completed analysis. They are beginning the socioeconomic and environmental benefit calculations. Next steps include 2004 and 2008 analyses.

Claude asked if the boundary geometry is the same for the urban heat island and the UTC studies. Jenny said she is going to have a call with Brian Stone to make sure they can be layered in the future. Rachel said they are going to compare Dr. Stone's hotspots to DRG's prioritized planting areas.

Henry asked what results would be available for us to use for fundraising through individual neighborhoods, council people, and companies. Jenny said there will be enough data to customize something for each potential funder. Henry asked if we could get information for a bank with several locations around town. Jenny said yes. Jenny said Henry could ask LOJIC, which will be the keeper of the raw data, for the information. Henry asked if Jenny will tell us the major opportunities for MSD. Jenny said yes.

An audience member asked about why SoBro is listed separately on the handout. Jenny said SoBro is not an official district, but it is located across several existing districts. Since SoBro is an area of interest for Louisville, Jenny is generating data for that area too.

Michelle asked if the analysis of potential planting areas will include parking lot planting opportunities. Jenny said probably not, but it would be a good next step for Louisville to take.

Henry asked if DRG could provide a list of cities that have been successful in implementing an ordinance with a UTC analysis. Jenny said yes.

An audience member asked if there would be a tool where they could feed in a list of addresses and see a tree map of the specific locations. Rachel said it depends on the GIS system, but generally, yes. Michelle said our LOJIC data is associated with addresses.

Commissioner Robert Eberenz, Jr. asked what is considered a healthy urban tree canopy. Jenny said an average of 40% across a city is recommended by the American Forest Service, but you need to decide what your goal is locally. This project proposal has a stated goal of 45%. The analysis will allow you to see what neighborhoods would be like without parks.

An audience member asked what cities have completed this type of project before and what resulted from the study. He wanted to make sure the data will be put to a practical use. Jenny said they did a lot of studies for areas around Chicago, and they used the results to create response plans for emerald ash borer. Jenny said DRG also just finished a plan for Lexington. The results were used to develop a planting plan to deal with stormwater. They are using it for fundraising too, Jenny said.

Henry asked how big of a team is working on this project. Jenny responded that the team includes her, Rachel and two GIS technicians working on this project full time. Other staff are pulled in as needed.

b. JCPS Tree Champions

Mike Hayman introduced a Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) Tree Champion - Tom Aberlie. Tom, Principal at Atherton High School (AHS), has been maintaining newly planted trees. Tom said his goal is to plant 10 trees each year, for 10 years. Mike said they could easily plant 100 more on their property. Tom said he created a wide mulch base around the trees at AHS to keep the lawn mowing equipment away from the tree trunks. Tom also mentioned that Atherton has a greenhouse that has never been put to use. Mike suggested that we capture suggestions of how to work with JCPS. Claude suggested turning all JCPS properties into one arboretum. Tom offered to facilitate the discussion on JCPS involvement in tree projects. Henry asked if there was a JCPS management newsletter where he can highlight Tom's work. An audience member gave an inaudible response.

Mike also wanted to recognize the environmental teacher at Brandeis – Tonda Montgomery, who could not be in attendance.

Mike also recognized two gentleman who have helped maintain trees in the Candlelight subdivision. – Kenneth McFarland and Steve Elble – both from the Auburndale Neighborhood Association. They planted 20 trees in the median of the subdivision and are working to plant more along the boulevard. An audience member suggested asking Miller Transportation for trees. Kenneth reported that they received a grant from the Auburndale neighborhood association for \$250.

V. Committee Reports

a. Policy Committee

Katy said the public hearing for the proposed changes to the Land Development Code will be at the Old Jail (6th and Liberty) on August 11th at 1pm. Anyone can sign up to speak. Katy will be giving the LMTAC's report.

b. Education Committee

Claude reported that, in January of this year, the first meeting of the Louisville Sustainability Council's (LSC) Action Teams met. One of these teams is the Tree Action Team. They are currently

aligning the goals of all of the tree-related groups around Louisville. A smaller group within the Tree Action Team will soon start working on a larger media campaign to support tree planting. Henry asked who will be part of this smaller group. Erin said the group includes her, Claude, Valerie Magnuson, Regina Blake, Commissioner Cadell Walker, Mesude and Chris Chandler (maybe). Emily Chandler, the interim executive director of the LSC will be present to help keep the conversation flowing. Claude said her goal is to have something ready in parallel to the completion of the UTC report.

VI. Community Projects Updates

Audience member suggested that the LMTAC organize a group to beat the Guinness Book of World Records record of tree hugging all at once. Erin said that Valerie Magnuson of Love Louisville Trees has suggested this too. Henry suggested trying to beat the world record at Forecastle.

VII. Adjourn

The next meeting is August 26, 2014, at 5:00pm in the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District Boardroom.

Henry adjourned the meeting at 6:17pm.